

Box Butte Hospital
Alliance, Nebraska
For both Medical and Surgical Cases
Obstetrics a Specialty
Rates, \$15 to \$25 per week
Bertrude S. Churchill, Supt.

Miss Mary E. Smalley
TEACHER OF VOICE
Miss Edith M. Swan
TEACHER OF PIANO
STUDIO—424 Laramie Avenue
Phone - - 220

DR. G. W. MITCHELL,
Physician and Surgeon Day and night calls
Office over Bogue Store, Phone 150.

L. W. BOWMAN,
PHYSICIAN AND SURGEON.
Office in First National Bank block, Alliance Nebraska.

H. A. COPSEY, M. D.
Physician and Surgeon
Phone 300
Calls answered promptly day and night from office. Offices—Alliance National Bank Building over the Post Office.

DR. CHAS. E. SLAGLE
WITH
DR. BELLWOOD
Special Attention
Paid to Eye Work

GEO. J. HAND,
HOMEOPATHIC
YSICIAN AND SURGEON
Formerly Internist Homeopathic Hospital University of Iowa.

Phone 251. Office over Alliance Shoe Store
Residence Phone 251.

Churchill & Thornton
PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS
(Successors to Dr. J. E. Moore)
OFFICE IN FLETCHER BLOCK
Office hours—11-12 a. m., 2-4 p. m. 7:30-9 p. m.
Office Phone 62
Res. Phone, Dr. Thornton, 187
Night calls, Phone 62 or 187

W. P. Snare
(Successor to Drs. Frey & Balfe)
OSTEOPATHIC
PHYSICIAN.
Graduate and Post-Graduate of the American School of Osteopathy at Kirksville, Mo.

May be found at his residence,
216 Toluca Avenue

Drs. Copperrill & Petersen
OSTEOPATH PHYSICIAN
(Successor to Drs. Frey & Balfe)
Office in Rumer Block
Office Phone 43, Residence 20
Examination at Office Free

Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Lockwood
UNDERTAKING AND EMBALMING
Funeral Director and Embalmer
Phones—Office 214, Res. 205
ALLIANCE NEBRASKA

GUY H. LOCKWOOD
Graduate Chicago School of Embalming
WITH
B. F. LOCKWOOD.

AUG. F. HORNBERG
Private Nurse
Phone 492

WILLIAM MITCHELL,
ATTORNEY
AT LAW.
ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA.

EUGENE BURTON
Attorney at Law
Office in rooms formerly occupied by R. C. Noleman, First Nat'l Bank bldg.
Phone 180. ALLIANCE, NEB.

F. M. BROOME
LAW AND LAND ATTORNEY.
Long experience in state and federal courts and as Register and Receiver U. S. Land Office is a guarantee for prompt and efficient service.
Office in Land Office Building.
ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA.

H. M. BULLOCK,
Attorney at Law,
ALLIANCE, NEB.

TUTTLE & TASH,
ATTORNEYS
AT LAW.
REAL ESTATE.
North Main St., ALLIANCE, NEB.

THE Princess Virginia

By C. N. and A. M. WILLIAMSON,
Authors of "The Lightning Conductor," "Rosemary in Search of a Father," Etc. etc.

COPYRIGHT, 1907, BY McCLURE, PHILLIPS & CO.

[CONTINUED.]

"I don't understand," she faltered. "You are the emperor, and I am no more than"—

"You are my wife if you love me."

In the shock of her ecstatic surprise she was helpless to resist him longer, and he held her close and passionately, his lips on her hair, her face crushed against his heart. She could hear it beating, feel it throb under her cheek. His wife? Then he loved her enough for that. Yet how was it possible for him to stand ready for her sake to override the laws of his own land?

"My darling—my wife!" he said again. "To think that you love me!"

"I have loved you from the first," the princess confessed, "but I was afraid you would feel, even if you cared, that we must say goodbye. Now"— And in an instant the whole truth would have been out, but the word "goodbye" stabbed him, and he could not let it pass.

"We shall not say goodbye, not for an hour," he cried. "After this I could not lose you. There's nothing to prevent my being your husband, you my wife. Would to God you were of royal blood and you should be my empress—the fairest empress that poet or historian ever saw—but we're prisoners of fate, you and I. We must take the goods the gods provide. My goddess you will always be, but the empress of Rhaetia even my love isn't powerful enough to make you. If I am to you only half what you are to me you'll be satisfied with the empire of my heart."

Suddenly the warm blood of Virginia's veins grew chill. It was as if a wind had blown up from the dark depths of the lake to strike like ice into her soul. An instant more and he would have known that she was a princess of the blood, and through his whole life she could have gone on whispering him because he had been ready to break down all barriers for her love before he guessed there need be none to break. Now her warm impulse of gratitude was frozen by the biting blast of disillusionment, but still there was hope left. It might be that she misunderstood him. She would not judge him yet.

"The empire of your heart!" she echoed. "If that were mine I should be richer than with all the treasures of the earth. If you were Leo, the chamois hunter, I would love you as I love you now, because in yourself you are the one man for me, and I'd go with you to the end of the world as your wife. But you're not the chamois hunter; you are the man I love, yet you are the emperor. Being the emperor, had you talked of a hopeless love and a promise not to forget, having nothing else to give me because of your high destiny and my humbler one, I could still have been happy. Yet you speak of more than that. You speak of something I can't understand. It seems to me that what a royal man offers the woman he loves should be all or nothing."

"I do offer you all," said Leopold, "all myself, my life, the heart and soul of me—all that's my own to give. The rest—belongs to Rhaetia."

"Then what do you mean by—"

"Don't you understand, my sweet, that I've asked you to be my wife? What can a man ask more of a woman?"

"Your wife, but not the empress. How can the two be apart?"

He tried to take her once more in his arms, but when he saw that she would not have it so he held his love in check and waited. He was sure that he would not need to wait long, for not only had he laid his love at her feet, but had pledged himself to a tremendous sacrifice on love's altar.

The step which in a moment of passion he had now resolved to take would create dissension among his people, alienate one who had been his second father, rouse England, America and Germany to anger because of the princess whose name rumor had already coupled with his and raise in every direction a storm of disapproval. When this girl whom he loved realized the immensity of the concession he was making because of his reverent love for her she would give her life to him now and forever.

Tenderly he took her hand and lifted it to his lips. Then when she did not draw it away, because he was to have his chance of explanation, he held it between both his own as he talked on.

"Dearest one," he said, "when I first knew I loved you—loved you as I didn't dream I could love a woman—for your sake and my own, I would have avoided meeting you too often. This I tell you frankly. I didn't see how in honor such a love could end except in despair for me and sorrow even for you if you should come to care. Had you and Lady Mowbray stayed on at the hotel in Kronberg I think I could have held to my resolve. But when Baroness von Lyndal suggested your coming here my heart leaped up. I said in my mind: 'At least I shall have the joy of seeing her every day for a time without doing anything to darken her future. Afterward, when she has gone out of my life, I shall have that radiance to remember. And so no harm will be done in the end, except that I shall have to pay by suffering.' Still I had no thought of the future without a parting. I felt that inevitable. And the suffering came hand in hand with the joy, for not a night here at Lyndalberg have I slept. If I had been weak I should have groaned aloud in the agony of renunciation."

"My rooms open on a lawn. More than once I've come out into the darkness when all the household was sleeping. Sometimes I have walked to this very spot where you and I stand now—heart to heart for the first time, my darling—asking myself whether there were any way out of labyrinth. It was not until I brought you here and saw you by my side, with the moon rays for a crown, that a flash of blinding light seemed to pierce the clouds. Suddenly I saw all things clearly, and though there will be difficulties, I count them as overcome."

"Still you haven't answered my question," said Virginia in a low, strained voice.

"I'm coming to that now. It was best that you should know first all that's been troubling my heart and brain during these few bitter-sweet days which have taught me so much. You know men who have their place at the head of great nations can't think first of themselves or even of those they love better than themselves. If they hope to snatch at personal happiness they must take the one way open to them and be thankful."

"Don't do me the horrible injustice to believe that I wouldn't be proud to show you to my subjects as their empress, but instead I can offer only what men of royal blood for hundreds of years have offered to women whom they honored as well as loved. You must have heard even in England of what is called a morganatic marriage. It is that I offer you."

"With a cry of pain—the cruel pain of wounded, disappointed love—the princess tore her hand from his."

"Never!" she exclaimed. "It's an insult."

"An insult? No, a thousand times no. I see that even now you don't understand."

"I think that I understand very well, too well," said Virginia brokenly. The beautiful fairy palace of happiness that she had watched as it grew lay shattered, destroyed, in the moment which ought to have seen its triumphant completion.

"I tell you that you cannot understand or you wouldn't say—you wouldn't dare to say, my love—that I'd insulted you. Don't you see, don't you know, that you would be my wife in the sight of all men as well as in the sight of God?"

"Your wife, you call it!" The princess gave a harsh little laugh which hurt as tears could not hurt. "You seem to have strange ideas of that word, which has always been sacred to me. A morganatic marriage! That is a mere pretense, a hypocrisy. I would be your wife, you say. I would give you all my love, all my life. You in return would give me—your left hand. And you know well that in a country which tolerates such a one sided travesty of marriage the laws would hold you free to marry another woman—a royal woman, whom you could make an empress—as free as if I had no existence."

"Great heaven, that you should speak so!" he broke out. "What if the law did hold me free? Can you dream—do you put me so low as to dream—that my heart would hold me free? My soul would be bound to you forever."

"So you may believe now. But the knowledge that you could change would be death to me—a death to die daily. Yes, I tell you again, it was an insult to offer a lot so miserable, so contemptible, to a woman you profess to love. How could you do it? If only you had never spoken the hateful words—if only you had left me the ideal I had of you—noble, glorious, above the whole world of men! But, after all, you are selfish, cruel. If you had said, 'I love you, yet we must part, for duty stands between us,' I could— But, no; I can never tell you now what I could have answered if you had said that instead of breaking my heart."

Under the fire of her reproach he

stood still, his lips tight, his shoulders braced, as if he held his breast open for the knife.

"By heaven, it is you who are cruel!" he said at last. "How can I make you see your injustice?"

"In no way. There's nothing more to be said between us two after this except goodbye."

"It shall not be goodbye."

"It must. I wish it."

He had caught her dress as she turned to go, but now he released her. "You wish it? It's not true that you love me, then?"

"It was true. Everything—everything in my whole life—is changed from this hour. It would be better if I'd never seen you. Goodbye."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

HE ran from him along the moonlit path. One step he took as if to follow and keep her, but checked himself and let her go. Only his eyes went with her, and in them there was more of pain than anger, though never before in all his life perhaps had he been thwarted in any strong desire. Passion urged him forward, but pride held him back, for Leopold was a proud man, and to have his love thrown in his face was to receive an icy douche with the blood at fever heat.

For this girl's sake he had in a few days changed the habits of a lifetime. Pride, reserve, self control, the wish not only to appear but to be a man above the frailties of common men, the ambition to be placed and worthily placed on a pedestal by his subjects—all these he had thrown away for Helen Mowbray.

He was too just a man not to admit that if one of his royal cousins of younger branches had contemplated such folly as this he would have done his best to nip that folly while it was in bud. "He josts at scars who never felt a wound," and until Leopold had learned by his own unlooked for experience what love can mean, what men will do for love while the sweet madness is on them, he would have been utterly unable to understand the state of mind.

A cousin inclined to act as he was now bent on acting would but a month ago have found all the emperor's influence, even force perhaps, brought to bear in restraining him. Leopold saw the change in himself, was startled and ashamed by it. Nevertheless he would have persevered, trampling down every obstacle that rose in his way, if only the girl had seen things with his eyes.

She had accused him of insulting her, not stopping to consider that even to make her morganatic his wife he must give great cause for complaint not only to his ministers, but to his people, for he was expected to marry a girl of royal blood that the country might have an heir. If Helen Mowbray had accepted the position he offered her, he could never have broken her heart by making another marriage.

Not only would it be difficult in these days to find a princess willing to tolerate such a rival, but it would have been impossible for him to desecrate the bond between himself and the one adored woman.

This being the case, with Helen Mowbray as his morganatic wife, there could be no direct heir to the throne. At his death the son of his uncle, the Archduke Joseph, would succeed, and during his life the popularity which was dear to him would be hopelessly forfeited. Rhaetia would never forgive him for selfishly preferring his own private happiness to the good of the nation.

He could fancy how old Iron Heart von Bretstein would present this point of view to him with fierce eloquence, temples throbbing like the ticking of a watch, eyes netted with bloodshot veins. But, on the other hand, he could picture himself standing calmly to face the storm, steadfast in his own indomitable will, happy with love to uphold him.

But now the will which had borne him through life in a triumphal march had been powerless against that of this young girl. She would have none of him. A woman whose face was her fortune, whose place in life was hardly as high as the first step of a throne, had refused—an emperor!

Hardly could Leopold believe the thing that had happened to him. He had spoken of doubting that he had won her love, and he had doubted. But he had allowed himself to hope, because he had confidence in his star and because perhaps it had scarcely been known in the annals of history that an emperor's suit should be repulsed.

Besides, he had loved the girl so passionately that it seemed she could not remain cold. And he hoped still that when she had passed a long night in reflection, in thinking over the situation, perhaps taking counsel with that comparatively commonplace yet practical little lady, her mother, she might be ready to change her mind.

For the first few moments after the stinging rebuff he had endured Leopold felt that if she did it would be her turn to suffer, for he could never humble himself to implore for the second time. But as he stood in the soft stillness of the night, gazing toward the lights of the house, thoughts of Virginia—her youth, her sweetness, her beauty dimmed with grief—overwhelmed him. Could he have reached her he would have fallen on his knees and kissed her gown.

By and by a vast tenderness breathed its calm over the thwarted passion in his breast, and plans to win her

back came whispering in his ear. He would write a letter and send it to her room. But, no; perhaps it would be wise to give her a longer interval for reflection and, it might be, regret. Tomorrow he would see her and show all the depths of that great love which she had thought to throw away. She could not go on withstanding him forever, and now that he had burned his boats behind him, he would never think of turning back. He would persevere till she should yield.

Meanwhile Virginia had hurried blindly toward the house, and it was instinct rather than intention that led her to the open window of the music room, by which she had come out.

Tears burned her eyelids, but they did not fall until she stood once more in the room where she and Leopold had been happy together. There she had sat at the piano, and he had bent over her, love in his eyes—honest love, she had thought, her heart full of thanksgiving. How little she had guessed then the humiliation in store for her and the end of all her hopes! How could she bear her pain, and how could she go on living out her life?

She paused in the window niche, looking into the room through a mist of tears, and a sob choked her. "Cruel, cruel!" she whispered. "What agony, what an insult!"

Then, dashing away her tears, she pushed back the dark curtains and would have passed on into the room had not the quick gesture brought her arm into contact with the buttons and gold braid on a man's breast. Instantly she realized that some one was hiding there, some one dressed in a military coat, and her first impulse was for flight, anything to escape unrecognized. But on second thoughts she changed her mind.

Whoever it was had in all probability hidden himself for the purpose of spying and was already aware that Miss Mowbray had rushed into the house weeping after a tete-a-tete with the emperor in the garden. Perhaps he had even caught a word or two of her sobbing ejaculation. No; she must not run away and leave the outcome of this affair to chance. She must see with whom she had to deal that she might know what was best to do.

She had taken a step into the room, but quick as light she turned, pulled away the screen of curtains and faced Captain von Bretstein.

It was a trying moment for him, and the girl's look stripped him of all his light audacity. She had come to the window by a different path from the one he had watched; therefore she had taken him unawares before he had time to escape, as he had planned. He was caught fairly and must save himself as best he could without preparation.

If her reproach forestalled his excuse he was lost. He must step into the breach at whatever risk. There was no time to weigh words. He must let loose the first that sprang to his lips.

"I see what you think of me," he said. "I see you think I was watching you. I swear I wasn't, though I knew you were in the garden with—the emperor. Wait—you must listen. You must hear my justification. I was sent to this room to fetch you. For your sake, how could I go back and say you had disappeared—together? I looked out into the garden and saw you—with him. I saw from your manner that—he had made you suffer. I was half mad with rage, guessing—guessing something which one word you let drop as you came in told me had happened. He is my sovereign, but—he has insulted you. Let me be your knight, as in days of old. Let me defend you, for I love you. I waited here to tell you this as you came, so that if you would we might announce an engagement."

If Virginia's eyes had been daggered he would have fallen at her feet propped to the heart. For one long second she looked at him without speaking, her face eloquent. Then she went by him with the proud bearing of a queen.

Egon was stricken dumb. Dully he watched her move across the room to a door which led into a corridor. He heard the whisper of her satin dress and saw the changing lights and shadows on its creamy folds under the crystal chandeliers; he saw the white reflection, like a spirit, mirrored deep under the polished surface of the floor.

Never had she been more beautiful. But she was beautiful in his eyes no longer. He had hurt her pride, but she had stabbed his vanity, and to wound Egon von Bretstein's vanity was to strike at his life. He hated the girl, hated her so sharply that his nerves ached with the intensity of his hatred, and the only relief he could have would be through reprisal.

He had not been able to deceive her. She knew that he had been spying, and it was fortunate for his future, he realized already, that she had broken with the emperor. He must do all he could, and do it quickly, to prevent a reconciliation lest she should work him injury.

As for his hastily stammered proposal, it was a good thing that the girl had not taken him at his word, for the chancellor had not given him permission to speak, and if she had accepted him he might have had to wriggle out of his engagement. Still, he could not forgive her scorn of him.

"Lorenz shall help me to pay her for this!" he said furiously to himself, too angry to mourn over lost hopes, lost opportunities. "He will know how to punish her. And between us she shall suffer."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

"In love with that penniless young scamp, are you?" said old Roxley. "Well, I propose to cure you of that."

"You can't," retorted the willful young girl. "I'm determined to marry him."

"That's it exactly. I propose to let you do it."—Exchange.

Under the fire of her reproach he

stood still, his lips tight, his shoulders braced, as if he held his breast open for the knife.

"By heaven, it is you who are cruel!" he said at last. "How can I make you see your injustice?"

"In no way. There's nothing more to be said between us two after this except goodbye."

"It shall not be goodbye."

"It must. I wish it."

He had caught her dress as she turned to go, but now he released her. "You wish it? It's not true that you love me, then?"

"It was true. Everything—everything in my whole life—is changed from this hour. It would be better if I'd never seen you. Goodbye."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

HE ran from him along the moonlit path. One step he took as if to follow and keep her, but checked himself and let her go. Only his eyes went with her, and in them there was more of pain than anger, though never before in all his life perhaps had he been thwarted in any strong desire. Passion urged him forward, but pride held him back, for Leopold was a proud man, and to have his love thrown in his face was to receive an icy douche with the blood at fever heat.

For this girl's sake he had in a few days changed the habits of a lifetime. Pride, reserve, self control, the wish not only to appear but to be a man above the frailties of common men, the ambition to be placed and worthily placed on a pedestal by his subjects—all these he had thrown away for Helen Mowbray.

He was too just a man not to admit that if one of his royal cousins of younger branches had contemplated such folly as this he would have done his best to nip that folly while it was in bud. "He josts at scars who never felt a wound," and until Leopold had learned by his own unlooked for experience what love can mean, what men will do for love while the sweet madness is on them, he would have been utterly unable to understand the state of mind.

A cousin inclined to act as he was now bent on acting would but a month ago have found all the emperor's influence, even force perhaps, brought to bear in restraining him. Leopold saw the change in himself, was startled and ashamed by it. Nevertheless he would have persevered, trampling down every obstacle that rose in his way, if only the girl had seen things with his eyes.

She had accused him of insulting her, not stopping to consider that even to make her morganatic his wife he must give great cause for complaint not only to his ministers, but to his people, for he was expected to marry a girl of royal blood that the country might have an heir. If Helen Mowbray had accepted the position he offered her, he could never have broken her heart by making another marriage.

Not only would it be difficult in these days to find a princess willing to tolerate such a rival, but it would have been impossible for him to desecrate the bond between himself and the one adored woman.

This being the case, with Helen Mowbray as his morganatic wife, there could be no direct heir to the throne. At his death the son of his uncle, the Archduke Joseph, would succeed, and during his life the popularity which was dear to him would be hopelessly forfeited. Rhaetia would never forgive him for selfishly preferring his own private happiness to the good of the nation.

He could fancy how old Iron Heart von Bretstein would present this point of view to him with fierce eloquence, temples throbbing like the ticking of a watch, eyes netted with bloodshot veins. But, on the other hand, he could picture himself standing calmly to face the storm, steadfast in his own indomitable will, happy with love to uphold him.

But now the will which had borne him through life in a triumphal march had been powerless against that of this young girl. She would have none of him. A woman whose face was her fortune, whose place in life was hardly as high as the first step of a throne, had refused—an emperor!

Hardly could Leopold believe the thing that had happened to him. He had spoken of doubting that he had won her love, and he had doubted. But he had allowed himself to hope, because he had confidence in his star and because perhaps it had scarcely been known in the annals of history that an emperor's suit should be repulsed.

Besides, he had loved the girl so passionately that it seemed she could not remain cold. And he hoped still that when she had passed a long night in reflection, in thinking over the situation, perhaps taking counsel with that comparatively commonplace yet practical little lady, her mother, she might be ready to change her mind.

For the first few moments after the stinging rebuff he had endured Leopold felt that if she did it would be her turn to suffer, for he could never humble himself to implore for the second time. But as he stood in the soft stillness of the night, gazing toward the lights of the house, thoughts of Virginia—her youth, her sweetness, her beauty dimmed with grief—overwhelmed him. Could he have reached her he would have fallen on his knees and kissed her gown.

By and by a vast tenderness breathed its calm over the thwarted passion in his breast, and plans to win her

back came whispering in his ear. He would write a letter and send it to her room. But, no; perhaps it would be wise to give her a longer interval for reflection and, it might be, regret. Tomorrow he would see her and show all the depths of that great love which she had thought to throw away. She could not go on withstanding him forever, and now that he had burned his boats behind him, he would never think of turning back. He would persevere till she should yield.

Meanwhile Virginia had hurried blindly toward the house, and it was instinct rather than intention that led her to the open window of the music room, by which she had come out.

Tears burned her eyelids, but they did not fall until she stood once more in the room where she and Leopold had been happy together. There she had sat at the piano, and he had bent over her, love in his eyes—honest love, she had thought, her heart full of thanksgiving. How little she had guessed then the humiliation in store for her and the end of all her hopes! How could she bear her pain, and how could she go on living out her life?

She paused in the window niche, looking into the room through a mist of tears, and a sob choked her. "Cruel, cruel!" she whispered. "What agony, what an insult!"

Then, dashing away her tears, she pushed back the dark curtains and would have passed on into the room had not the quick gesture brought her arm into contact with the buttons and gold braid on a man's breast. Instantly she realized that some one was hiding there, some one dressed in a military coat, and her first impulse was for flight, anything to escape unrecognized. But on second thoughts she changed her mind.

Whoever it was had in all probability hidden himself for the purpose of spying and was already aware that Miss Mowbray had rushed into the house weeping after a tete-a-tete with the emperor in the garden. Perhaps he had even caught a word or two of her sobbing ejaculation. No; she must not run away and leave the outcome of this affair to chance. She must see with whom she had to deal that she might know what was best to do.

She had taken a step into the room, but quick as light she turned, pulled away the screen of curtains and faced Captain von Bretstein.

It was a trying moment for him, and the girl's look stripped him of all his light audacity. She had come to the window by a different path from the one he had watched; therefore she had taken him unawares before he had time to escape, as he had planned. He was caught fairly and must save himself as best he could without preparation.

If her reproach forestalled his excuse he was lost. He must step into the breach at whatever risk. There was no time to weigh words. He must let loose the first that sprang to his lips.

"I see what you think of me," he said. "I see you think I was watching you. I swear I wasn't, though I knew you were in the garden with—the emperor. Wait—you must listen. You must hear my justification. I was sent to this room to fetch you. For your sake, how could I go back and say you had disappeared—together? I looked out into the garden and saw you—with him. I saw from your manner that—he had made you suffer. I was half mad with rage, guessing—guessing something which one word you let drop as you came in told me had happened. He is my sovereign, but—he has insulted you. Let me be your knight, as in days of old. Let me defend you, for I love you. I waited here to tell you this as you came, so that if you would we might announce an engagement."

If Virginia's eyes had been daggered he would have fallen at her feet propped to the heart. For one long second she looked at him without speaking, her face eloquent. Then she went by him with the proud bearing of a queen.

Egon was stricken dumb. Dully he watched her move across the room to a door which led into a corridor. He heard the whisper of her satin dress and saw the changing lights and shadows on its creamy folds under the crystal chandeliers; he saw the white reflection, like a spirit, mirrored deep under the polished surface of the floor.

Never had she been more beautiful. But she was beautiful in his eyes no longer. He had hurt her pride, but she had stabbed his vanity, and to wound Egon von Bretstein's vanity was to strike at his life. He hated the girl, hated her so sharply that his nerves ached with the intensity of his hatred, and the only relief he could have would be through reprisal.

He had not been able to deceive her. She knew that he had been spying, and it was fortunate for his future, he realized already, that she had broken with the emperor. He must do all he could, and do it quickly, to prevent a reconciliation lest she should work him injury.

As for his hastily stammered proposal, it was a good thing that the girl had not taken him at his word, for the chancellor had not given him permission to speak, and if she had accepted him he might have had to wriggle out of his engagement. Still, he could not forgive her scorn of him.

"Lorenz shall help me to pay her for this!" he said furiously